

RANDY KELLY

**The Capital City
Education Initiative:
Accountability and Action
for World-Class Schools**

The Kelly Vision

Building a great City for the 21st century requires great schools and educational opportunities for citizens of all ages. Educational excellence is key to Saint Paul's economic future because our workers need world-class skills for our businesses to compete in the global economy. High-performing schools are critical elements of our City's quality of life because good schools anchor our neighborhoods, and successful students become productive citizens who contribute to the community.

As a state legislator, Randy Kelly has been a tireless advocate for quality education. **As Mayor of Saint Paul, Randy Kelly will make it a top priority to continuously improve education in our City.**

More than 20 years in public service have taught Randy two principal lessons about education. First, money and good intentions are not enough. Second, we need to focus on setting goals and rallying the community to achieve them, not on assigning blame for any challenges we confront.

Our entire community must support the mission of our teachers, parents and students. Our entire community must share responsibility for achieving educational excellence. **We must all hold ourselves accountable, individually and collectively. We must all demand results and accept no excuses until all Saint Paul kids have a world-class education.**



A Father's Perspective

As a father, Randy Kelly understands that parents are their children's first, and most important, teachers. When it comes time to bring other teachers into their kids' lives, parents need options so they can choose a school that supports them, listens to them, and provides a quality education. **As Mayor, Randy Kelly will continue to support charter schools and other alternatives to keep Saint Paul the capital of school choice.**

Randy knows that **supporting parents means more than ensuring great schools. It also means ensuring safe streets, good jobs, great parks and libraries, and affordable taxes.** As Mayor, Randy Kelly will make sure our City government continues to deliver on these important responsibilities.

The Kelly Record

As a state legislator for nearly 20 years, Randy Kelly has made a significant improvement in the educational lives of Minnesotans. He has:

- * Enhanced school safety through the Schools are for Education (SAFE) initiative
- * Authored legislation to meet the needs of gifted and talented students
- * Authored legislation to encourage companies and individuals to mentor students
- * Authored legislation to provide more computers in schools
- * Served as a key partner with the City of Saint Paul, the Saint Paul school district, Ramsey County, the YMCA, and the Wilder Foundation in the new John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School, a comprehensive education reform and neighborhood development program to increase educational standards and school attendance and reduce barriers to learning
- * Supported charter schools to increase options for parents and students
- * Supported legislation to enhance accountability for results and spending responsibility
- * Increased higher education and adult retraining opportunities through the support of Metropolitan State University, a robotics training facility at the Ford Plant, and job training for displaced workers and new Americans

Action Plan -- The Capital City Education Initiative

Mayor Randy Kelly will establish the Capital City Education Initiative to call everyone in our diverse community to action on our most pressing education needs, work to establish tangible goals and outcomes, and persist until those goals are met. This Initiative will provide the framework for the Kelly administration to work with the school district and other public and nonpublic K-12 schools, Saint Paul's higher education institutions, teachers, parents, businesses, non-profits, arts organizations, foundations, and other stakeholders to meet Saint Paul's education needs.

To begin this process, **Mayor Kelly will establish a cabinet-level position to help lead the Initiative. No other mayor in Saint Paul's history has given this level of priority to education.** The cabinet-level official will also serve as liaison to the school district and other education institutions to address specific issues such as transportation and school-related neighborhood concerns.

Mayor Kelly will ask the Initiative to develop action plans in the following five areas:

Action Item #1: A City-Wide Education Report Card

Establishing high goals inspires action, creativity and solutions that challenge the status quo. **The Initiative will work to establish goals in key areas, engage the broader public, track progress, coordinate priorities, consider innovative solutions, and target resources.** The Initiative will build on the school district's effort to report to parents on each school's performance, and it will **create an annual city-wide education report card to analyze performance in critical areas and hold everyone accountable for reaching established goals.**

Action Item #2: Reading, Reading, Reading

A primary goal of the Initiative will be for Saint Paul third graders to be able to read as well as their statewide and suburban peers. The evidence is overwhelming that students who can read well by the third grade are on the path to academic success, graduation, and good jobs. Those who cannot are more likely to skip school, lose interest, drop out, end up in low-wage jobs, or get in trouble with the law.

According to the 1999/2000 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA), 60% of Saint Paul public school third graders could read at or near grade level, while 40% could not. Statewide, 82% of third graders could read at or near grade level. Saint Paul cannot -- and must not -- leave 40% of our students behind. We must meet or beat the statewide average on third grade reading tests, such as the MCA, and we must put this community's time and talent toward achieving this goal in five years. **The Kelly administration will do so by building on the award-winning "Saint Paul Reads" public/private partnership initiated by**

Superintendent Harvey and the school district in 1999, **which has resulted in Saint Paul students reading over one million books this year.** This effort will support reading and literacy curriculum in the schools and be tied to measurable results.

Working toward this goal will be a catalyst for developing a broader agenda and establishing other goals. **Helping kids to read by third grade will require progress in other areas, such as pre-school education, working with English language learners, attendance, and truancy.** Making progress on the reading goal will also produce positive results in areas such as **high school and adult literacy, graduation rates, and work force readiness.**

Action Item #3: The Best Educators

Saint Paul is blessed with hard-working, dedicated educators who work in increasingly changing and challenging environments. We need to ensure that our teachers and administrators have the best training and tools in instruction, leadership and organizational management and change. **The Initiative will draw upon the best ideas from the public and private sectors and work with educators to make these ideas useful and relevant in our schools.**

Action Item #4: Expanding the Role of Higher Education

Saint Paul's higher education institutions and their students make a tremendous contribution to this community. But for too long, they have not been brought to the table to help define and implement a broader education agenda for the City and to develop specific actions to contribute to Saint Paul's economy and quality of life. As part of the Initiative, **Mayor Randy Kelly will convene the leaders of Saint Paul's higher education institutions to develop action plans that will allow them to help in such areas as mentoring students, matching student skills to employer needs, technology, and entrepreneurship training.**

Action Item #5: Technology for Tomorrow

We know that all of us -- and particularly our students -- must understand today's technology and be prepared to master tomorrow's. **The Initiative will call upon the City's knowledge and resources, particularly those of Saint Paul's technology-based companies, to ensure that our schools and students have access to the latest technology and related training.** In addition, ways to better use technology to educate and train will be explored, particularly for adult and non-traditional students who cannot always be at "school."



Leading the Way

A quality education can help prevent social injustice, and is a basic building block for a healthy, vibrant City. Saint Paul is poised to be a national leader in urban education. We have strong assets:

- * A school district that is showing progress by focusing on results and accountability
- * Innovative alternatives such as charter schools
- * A strong base of private and parochial schools to provide needed options for families
- * A business community that supports quality education
- * A revitalized downtown, healthy neighborhoods, and a growing tax base, which have provided the confidence to invest

We now have the opportunity -- and the obligation -- to become a national model of urban education. Mayor Randy Kelly will help lead us there.